

Paris, Jan. 30th. '57. Thursday (1)

My dear Lizzie, It seems quite a hopeless task to undertake to give an account of Versailles, where Monday took us. But I fear it would not be quite satisfactory to say, Monday we went to Versailles - For you would have no idea what a pleasant excursion it was & how much we enjoyed it - So I will try to give some faint idea of how we passed the day - I believe we all looked anxiously at the clouds, & were delighted to see a bright sun-shiny day, which had not been for some days - So, at 10 o'clock two carriages came - Aunt Lizzie, Ella & Sarah took their places in one carriage, & Uncle Charles got upon the box - Uncle Lowell, Lizzie & I went in the other - The environs of Paris do not look so prettily now as about London, it is not so green, & I do not think there is so much fine order & high keeping as there seem, to me at least, more suburbs & shabby houses, but winter's hand is not a fair time to judge though, except in the loss of leaves & want of vegetation we see everything else like winter - It is wonderfully mild & warm - Versailles is some 10 miles from Paris, & in the way there you pass the Iron fence & Lodges & gates, & looking through see the long avenues of trees which lead up to the Palace of St. Cloud - The approach to Versailles is through an immense straight avenue, rows of trees on each side, you pass through the gates & continue on a straight road, buildings on each side, some private houses & others public, until you come to two long & massive ranges, one on each side, which were built for the stables to the Palace - One is now turned into a school for Cavalry & the other is a sort of Agricultural institution - They have handsome fronts, sweeping out semi-circularly, with court yards enclosed by iron railing, & these fronts are towards the palace which stands at the end of this fine avenue - A long courtyard comes down surrounded by an iron railing, & gradually rising towards the palace; down each side are enormous statues of grand distinguished men of France, some of which formerly ornamented le Pont de la Concorde - There were formerly iron railings separating this courtyard into two more, & they still retain their name

The palace is shaped somewhat in this fashion, that is the (the sides of my elegant plan should be equal) the immediate front set back, & the wings project - It is rather bewildering from its immense size & numerous wings - But after reaching the front of the palace & before entering within the iron gates, we turned to the right suddenly, & went down the main street of the town, then again to the left, & after passing through a long avenue of trees drew up before the grand

Trianon - This was a smaller Palace, built by Louis XIV for Madame de Maintenon. And was Napoleon's favorite mansion when he used to come from St Cloud - And Louis Philippe when restoring Versailles lived here - It is still furnished as when he last lived there - The bed-chamber was superb, & there were a suite of rooms prepared for the Queen of England for her expected visit to Louis Philippe; the bed chamber & bed were very handsome, but the rest of the furniture I did not think so very elegant - But the rooms were very high & handsome - All was on one floor - One dining room was very splendid, a long gallery connecting two wings, & windows on each side, & beautiful pictures on the walls - There were many beautiful & interesting things about, a superb malachite table given by Alexander, beautiful antiquities, &c. &c - Then we went to the Trianon built by Louis XV for Madame du Barry - Louis XVI gave it to Marie Antoinette - And the last person who inhabited it was the Duchess of Orleans, widow of Louis Philippe's son - It is a little gem of a palace, only just rooms enough for one good suite - Then we walked through some lovely grounds, which Marie Antoinette laid out à l'Anglaise, which were charming now, though all the leaves were off the trees, & a little pond where she had built a little village of Swiss houses, & where you know she used to have her dairy - Then we drove back to the Palace of Versailles, & driving through the iron gates drew up at a side wing where we got a guide - There is a splendid bronze statue of Louis XIV in the middle of the court - And such a view as you stand on the esplanade to rather east before the Palace; the great Avenue in front leading to Paris, & great avenues on each side stretching as far as the eye can reach! - The courtyards, quite up to the Palace, are paved with small stones - First we went into great galleries where are arranged statues of all the great men, then through galleries of paintings of great events, great suites of rooms with all the dainties of Napoleon, then suites of marble veins, then up into a magnificent gallery made by Louis Philippe by borrowing a long range of rooms into one, & richly ornamented with columns & painted ceiling, &c. & hung round the walls with pictures of events of French history from Clovis down - I looked at battles until I was sick of them, & though wondering at what the French had attained, felt it was not worth the horror & the bloodshed - It was a relief to go higher into a

The Palace of Versailles

very suite of rooms filled with historical portraits, beginning with the quaintest & stiffest <sup>of early, early times</sup> down to the present time - Oh how much there was to interest them! What beautiful women the Madames & Mesdemoiselles of Louis XIV & Louis XV families! Then Marie Antoinette, & then La reine, of Napoleon & all his family, then Louis XVIII, &c - then present times; there was a portrait of Victoria, & Albert, a distinguished Englishman; & several portraits of Calhoun, Webster, Washington, the Presidents, &c. &c - One could well spend days there! - Louis Philippe did an immense deal for Versailles! And very soon the French will be very proud of him - Versailles was so dilapidated after the frightful revolution, & he began to restore it, & collected everything together, & it was ~~now~~ <sup>then</sup> no longer a royal residence, but destined "à braver les floues de France" - Then we went through the magnificent state apartments of Louis XIV, superb beyond anything I ever saw, & three magnificent historical pictures still surrounded the walls - Some things still left, the table of council, & fauteuil, of le grand monarque - Things of Louis XVI & Marie Antoinette; we saw the bed on which Louis XIV died, & in which was used it since; & from the <sup>palace</sup> ~~chamber~~ of that room Louis XVI addressed the mob the night he was dragged in from Versailles to Paris - Then through the private suite of apartments of Louis & Marie Antoinette; her wardrobe, her dressing room, her bathing room - In some of the rooms her furniture still left, but the curtains were of superb white damask of the time of the Empire - These rooms were also very interesting from other historical associations of the former inhabitants - Then the famous salon of the Bail de Bazouf; then Marie Antoinette's state apartments; the room where her friends were killed defending the entrance to her room the night of the 10th of October, the little secret door through which she escaped from her bed chamber when she sprang from her bed - There were also some with some of David's great pictures of Napoleon - He came down a most superb stair-case of marble built by Marie Antoinette, & by which the people rushed that fearful night - The saw most costly carriages, all gold & velvet & enamel paintings of Charles X & others - Indeed I cannot say the half of what you saw & saw -

I suppose there is nothing in the world which compares with it. Read one must notice in what nice order the French government keep these places, everything so neat & in such good order, the floors all nicely waxed; men in various directions to point the way, & all so well arranged. He did not get back again until 6 or after - and I spent the evening cramming French history. - The next morning Tuesday it rained hard, but cleared when Aunt Lizzie & I went out about 12. He went first to "la mère de famille," where one gets all sorts of very fine thread silks &c. - And then went to call on Madame Grand Pierre, Juliet's sister, & from whom I had a note to her - They were just leaving our cards, understanding she could not see us - When she came running down stairs - She is a very pleasing person, looks something like Madame Sandoy - She talks a little English - He saw there her niece, Mademoiselle Chollet - a young sister of mine's who is going to school in London for a year. Poor child, she is about 10 & cannot speak a word of English, & knows only one person in London! I have promised to seek her out & see her there - They live a long way off, quite out of Paris, outside the barrier. - On our way back Aunt Lizzie & I stopped at the Palais Royal, the lower story of which is shops opening under a high arcade, the second story making the roof, & around the open square in the middle, with its fountains; on a fair day, crowded with people, it is a very gay & pretty sight - I bought a dressing case, very compact & nice, & neatly furnished for 26 francs - And I tried my first attempt at bargaining, for they say it is a thing the French always expect; and Aunt Lizzie & I were quite vexed we had not offered less, for they agreed at once to the reduction. - Then we drove in a hurry to get a bunch of flowers for Lizzie's hair for the party. You never saw such lovely flowers, it seems as if every new flower were imitated at once, & there were the girls making them up to order - They made a very <sup>pretty</sup> bunch of clematis while we were waiting. - Thanks to Eliza & Sarah's taking a domestic evening we were home in good time for dinner. Uncle Lowell, Aunt Lizzie, Lizzie & Augustus went to a party at Mrs. Tires in the Eve. Aunt Lizzie looked beautifully; she had on a dress made in England, a sort of pale blue & white brocade beautifully made & trimmed, a wreath of blue & silver with Brussels lace lapels, & a beautiful Brussels lace mantle over her shoulders; Uncle Charles thought we had quite the fun of the party in seeing her dressed.

Paris. Feb. 3rd.

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Wednesday the 29<sup>th</sup>. in the morning Aunt Lizzie, Uncle Lowell, Lizzie & myself went over to the Gobelin's to see the manufacture of tapestries - You cannot tell how magnificent they are. We first went into a room where finished ones were hung up, & I thought certainly they were the richest oil paintings; had no idea until I came close to them, that they were tapestry. They will bear most minute inspection, for the shading, colour, & all in a kind, is so exquisite & delicate you cannot tell where one shade ends & the other begins - They take beautiful pictures & copy them in this most exquisite & brilliant way - He went into the room where they <sup>were</sup> at work, & saw these splendid works in progress - I watched as closely as I could, but could not make out the way it was done. Great frames are filled with cords running side by side <sup>up & down,</sup> then the outline of the pattern is traced on these cords <sup>in pencil, and</sup> woven in by hand with various wools, which are all dyed in the establishment; the pattern hangs over head or behind, and then work on the wrong side, so that the right side was towards us - The worked look exactly like silk. Then we went down stairs & saw the carpets; they are woven on the right side & cut like velvet - and look like velvet too, only <sup>in</sup> the greater delicacy & richness of the patterns, & the carpet seemed finer - We have learned since that it takes some 20 years to make a large picture - And that they will pay for a piece large enough for a curtain to a large door, <sup>8000 fr.</sup> Then we left the Gobelin's we went to the Hotel de Clugny, which <sup>is an</sup> old building which has filled a great many offices, & was <sup>repaired</sup> <sup>by</sup> <sup>the</sup> <sup>French</sup> <sup>government</sup> <sup>to</sup> <sup>light</sup> <sup>it</sup> <sup>at</sup> <sup>his</sup> <sup>death</sup> <sup>of</sup> <sup>large</sup> <sup>address</sup> <sup>paid</sup> <sup>by</sup> <sup>an</sup> <sup>old</sup> <sup>gentleman</sup> <sup>who</sup> <sup>was</sup> <sup>a</sup> <sup>great</sup> <sup>antiquarian</sup>, & who collected all sorts of antiquities, carvings in ivory & wood, most beautiful cabinets, tapestries, bronzes, coins, medals, &c. The whole house is filled, & it is a beautiful specimen of old French architecture in itself - Adjoining is the Palais de Thermes, the remains of an old Roman palace & of baths. Charles Howard dined with us. And in the evening Mr & Madame Grand-Pierre came to pass the evening & to Mr. Chollet - The Grand-Pierres are very interesting people, and we all like them very much; Aunt Lizzie & Uncle Lowell had known them before.

Thursday morning Aunt Lizzie & I drove out to see the church of St. Denis. Under this church the kings of France have been buried from the earliest. The church was very much desecrated & injured during the first revolution - many of the tombs violated; Louis Philippe did a great deal to restore it - It is an imposing building in a singular style of Gothic - and has beautiful doors of bronze - The effect on exterior is very good, for it is

lighted by windows of richly stained glass, some are modern; & the roof is high with fine large columns - On one side near the entrance is the tomb of Bayard - Higher up are imposing monuments of Francis I & his queen, Mary of Medici; & Henry II; & Catherine de Medici & Henry II - They are sort of porticos supported by pillars, & underneath are stretched marble effigies of the bodies, wadded & worn, & scarcely any drapery - Above kneel the figures clothed as in life - One side is painted in the style of a chapel, "Chœur d'ivoire" it is called, & a monument erected by Mary, Queen of Scots, <sup>to the memory of her husband Francis II.</sup> In the choir stands the grand relief of bronze, before which Napoleon was married to Marie Louise - The side chapels around the choir are also painted Byzantine style, but as there is not so much light, & the pillars from which the arches spring are of white marble, the effect is much better than in the choir d'ivoire - This byzantine is modern, but only a renewal of the style in which the church was built - In one of the transepts is a large square surrounded by an iron railing, enclosing a platform with a large white cross on a black, round painted upon it - Beneath is the entrance to the royal vault, where are the bodies of Louis XVI & Marie Antoinette; & at the foot of the stairs is the body of Louis XVIII, waiting until the next king buried, take its place - We descended into the crypt & began with the monuments of Louis, & came round to those of the family of Louis XIV; they are in niches & alcoves - but you must imagine this crypt a low, heavy place, supported by low, solid columns, & lighted by small windows - We could not see the tomb of Louis & Marie Antoinette; but we saw a beautiful statue to her, said to be an excellent likeness - These monuments were taken down & concealed during the revolution of '93, & now are replaced - and they said all were original except the first & most ancient - they are generally effigies stretched upon the tomb - But there are some more statelike & some busts - In our way back Aunt Lizzie & I stopped & walked round the Palais Royal, & then found our way home on foot - In the evening Aunt Lizzie, Uncle Charles, Lizzie, Augustus, Eliza & myself all went to the Opera - He found it the Baston ofenville instead of Don Giovanni, & I was laid for your sake, Charlie - It is a very handsome work - but the boxes I should think were folorn places, for they are only half the size of ours, & the partition is carried quite up to the ceiling, so that those in one box cannot see those in another - And they do not come quite to the front; or round the balustrades in front is a row of seats

ought separately, & called the balcony, & they are about the pleasantest seats in the house - The front of the balcony was open work richly filled; the ceiling was handsomely painted, the boxes were lined with red, & the balcony & seats in the barge where we were were covered with red plush - & in the barge were rose wood armchairs - the barge occupied about half the seat, & behind were the common pit seats - The scenery was very handsome, & looked substantial; & the dresses were very handsome - The chorus was excellent, & there was a very good orchestra - The new entry was Rivina, Labache the old man, & Calzolari Altamira - he is a young man quite handsome & with a very agreeable voice - Cyano was capitally played, though the man was not quite as graceful as Rossi, or so - But he had a very fine voice - Labache is perfectly immense - He makes everyone look like a baby on the stage beside him, and his voice moves in speaking seems like an organ - and in the music in the most rapid music, every word is most distinctly & perfectly uttered - His appearance was more like the comic prince after taking the medicine to make him grow fat, that we saw the last of before I left you, than any thing I can describe - But he acted the part most capitally. He is an excellent actor, & made the part amusing, without caricaturing it as the actor in Boston did - They introduced a scene which I am sure I did not see at some time - He appeared at the window after the scene made a noise a note not - and some little things were left out which I saw before - as for Sunday we cannot describe a scene upon paper; but such delicate, beautiful, and like warblers I could describe in rhyme - Her execution is wonderfully perfect, & the high notes are wonderfully sweet, clear & soft - Dr. Putnam thought her superbly fine, & he & I exchanged sympathetic smiles of delight - She is not exactly pretty, though she is pleasing in appearance, & I could not believe her so old - The character of the "Sera" are not such as to require much passion or expression, so I could not judge of her in that way - but the whole all taken together was as much superior to the works of Senille at home as possible - I should have preferred in the whole a different opera, something more sweet & impassioned - For though the music is most graceful, & brilliant, & some parts beautiful, I find it always most difficult to recall, & it dwells little with me -

I suppose you would like to know the style of dress - It is not like dress, though some people appear so - but rather dress in some little dress bonnet, crape, lace, &c. or with a pretty head dress, & in high neck & long sleeves - The French do not wear low neck & short sleeves nearly as much as the

English, I think it in better taste — New. Feb. 7<sup>th</sup> Friday

I got back from Paris yesterday, dear Lizzie, after sundry delays; & such a budget of letters as I found awaiting me! — For I had not received all of the week before, & got them too late to answer last week. — But, to my especial delight, the daguerotypes were here — Oh thank you & Patrick so many, many times for them! They are all ranged in the mantle-piece — And I cannot go across the room without stopping to look at my row of little darlings — Little Pat has grown a great deal & looks older, but still so very like himself — Charlie in his manner is precisely! so dignified, so decided, & condescending; some very grave & absurd remarks is lingering behind; I do not think he has changed at all — Fittie's is the least satisfactory in that way & for that very reason the more valuable! How the little witch has grown! I cannot fancy her the baby I left, she looks two or three years old! — And I trace a great many resemblances in her face — Oh my little, little darlings! — I am so impatient sometimes to see them — I was quite touched with little Pat's affection for the nurse! — I wish to make a foot pilgrimage thither — Now Pat's piece please give all the three children a treat from me — get a nice piece & take them out there, & let them pay the expenses to our account; & I shall write for Parvanah to give each a little bunch of flowers from me —

And now for the letters — 2 from Sue, from you, dear Lizzie, from Charles, from Ida, from John, from Patrick, one of his nice envelopes — As for washing, Lizzie, I have not known a family, where I could know it down such towns, in which it was done in the house! — In great establishments they have a laundress, perhaps 2 or 3 in the work — generally an entirely distinct establishment from the nurse. — I should like to join one of your nice little ensembles! — Do not be anxious about our dining, Sue, for our old women cook very nicely. — But, dear one! I never shall now put a "fear-oh, Sue" to thank you side, only in point so far as father! I wish I were as valiant as you are! The children's "Prayer books" were very edifying! — But I like to have children begin to go to church, for it gets them into a good habit and the idea is so methinks, though they may be too young to gain much from the service — I wish the plan were settled for Charlie to join us! — I think of the removal of the mathematical tutor! But I fear it would be too hard work for you, Charlie — Don't pray throw away strength now — a day's waste, <sup>is</sup> the most foolish & irreparable of losses — I thank you very much, & will answer soon — I am very sorry Aunt calls us but to remain where we are in her family — Cook has called on us a few while, I was away & will stay some time — Miss Popham wrote me from Paris — I found besides, a letter from Aunt Anna, from re, & from the Rev. Dr. Doane — I am sorry not to write up the journal, better, but have to do three or four still & must live in haste — With most affectionate love to all, ever your loving friend,  
Caroline